Office of the
Information Commissioner of Canada

2010-2011 Estimates

Report on Plans and Priorities

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Interim Information Commissioner
of Canada

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Message from the Interim Information Commissioner of Canada

I am pleased to submit to Parliament the 2010-2011 Report on Plans and Priorities of the Office of the Information Commissioner of Canada.

Two years ago, in response to considerable challenges in delivering on our mandate, this Office embarked on an ambitious renewal program. These efforts have resulted in the introduction of a new business model designed to bolster our core investigative process and enhance its impact.

I am proud to report that after a full year of implementation, our new business model is already paying dividends. The Office is closing substantively more complaints per year than ever before, and we are just a few months away from declaring victory on the historical backlog of complaints that this Office accumulated over the years. We now have a full contingent of dynamic and dedicated employees, and a training program is in place to further develop their expertise in the particulars of the investigative function.

By adopting an integrated approach to systemic issues, we are becoming more strategic and proactive in identifying and addressing issues that adversely affect access to information in Canada. Strengthening our information management capacity has allowed us to provide exemplary service in quickly responding to access requests made to this Office and fulfilling the duty to assist information requesters.

We owe these early successes to the dedication of our staff and to the support and feedback provided by a wide range of stakeholders, including access to information professionals in federal institutions and members of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics.

Continuity in action and purpose characterizes our priorities for 2010-2011. We will continue to monitor and adjust our investigations management process to reap further benefits in efficiency and timeliness. The continued implementation of our Three-Year Plan for Report Cards will confirm the effectiveness of our integrated approach to systemic issues. We will continue to maximize institutions' compliance with their access to information obligations through various means, particularly by promoting and practicing greater proactive dissemination of information. We will provide ongoing assistance to Parliament in its efforts to modernize the access to information regime.

As our new business model gains in experience and maturity, we will turn our attention to developing new strategies to deal with our most challenging cases. Access to information is essential to government transparency and accountability. It informs citizen participation and contributes to maintaining a healthy democracy. In today's knowledge

economy, public sector information is increasingly seen as a strategic national resource that can stimulate collaboration, content creation and innovation.

Abroad and at the local level in Canada, "open government" and "open data" initiatives are gaining momentum in making data sets more readily available online for public use. The Office of the Information Commissioner will work relentlessly to promote the paradigm shift required for greater public sector transparency in the hope that it will inspire similar initiatives at the national level.

Suzanne Legault
Interim Information Commissioner of Canada

Section I – Overview

1.1 Summary Information

Raison d'être

The Office of the Information Commissioner ensures that the rights conferred to information requestors by the *Access to Information Act* are respected, which ultimately enhances transparency and accountability across the federal government.

Responsibilities

The Office is an independent public body which was established in 1983 under the *Access to Information Act* to assist the Information Commissioner of Canada in his/her role as Officer of Parliament and Ombudsman.

The Office is primarily responsible for carrying out thorough, objective and timely investigations of complaints and issues of concern on how federal institutions handle access to information requests from the public. In carrying out this responsibility, it gives complainants, heads of federal institutions and all third parties affected by complaints a reasonable opportunity to make representations.

In addition, the Office supports the Information Commissioner in his/her advisory role to Parliament and parliamentary committees on all access to information matters. Where required, it assists the Commissioner in bringing issues of interpretation of the *Access to Information Act* and enforcement of the law before the Federal Court. In delivering its mandate, the Office also promotes Canadians' right to access information held by federal institutions and advances a pro-disclosure culture around public sector information.

New business model[1]
In 2007-2008, in response to considerable challenges affecting its ability to deliver on its mandate, the Office proceeded to re-engineer its way of doing business. It developed and introduced a new business model in order to achieve sterling service delivery to Canadians.

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[1] http://www.infocom.gc.ca/reports/2008-2009-ar-new-business-model-ra-nouveau-modele-gestion-e.asp

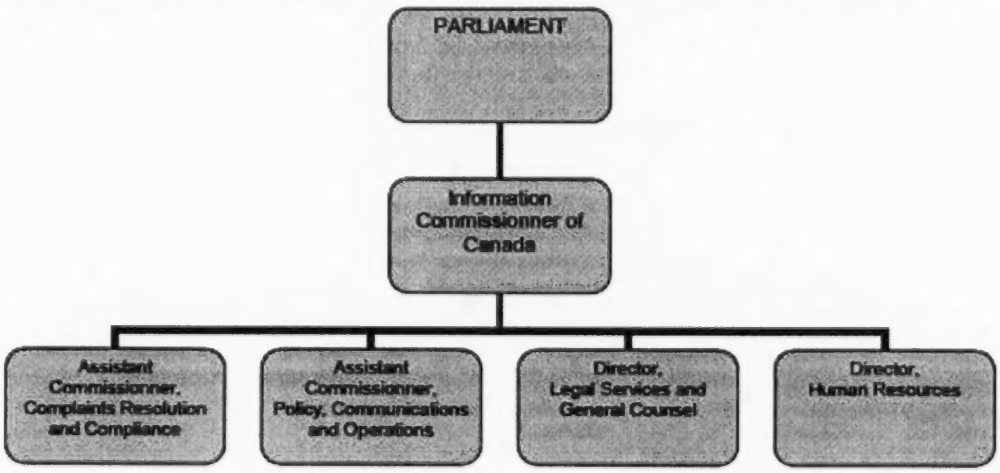
This business model is designed to meet three goals:

- To increase efficiency and timeliness of investigations through a streamlined process, which also aims to eliminate the organization's historical backlog of complaints and prevent its recurrence;
- To strategically and proactively address systemic issues and non-compliance by integrating key information, observations and conclusions from various sources, including: investigations of complaints, report cards on institutions' performance, systemic investigations into widespread or recurring issues of concern, and feedback from all stakeholders; and
- To maximize institutions' compliance with the Act by using various tools and activities that support and complement investigative and systemic actions.

Streamlining the investigations management process has already paid dividends as indicated by the number of complaints closed. For 2009-2010, this number is expected to be close to 2,000 complaints closed as compared to 1,770 for 2008-2009. In particular, the Office was able to reduce its backlog of pre-April 2008 complaints from 1,594 in November 2008 to 516 at the end of January 2010.

The Interim Information Commissioner has made it a priority for 2010-2011 to continue with the implementation of the business model in order to achieve the highest level of service delivery to Canadians. The OIC will closely monitor the performance of its investigations management process and make adjustments as required. It will also pursue two other important components of the organization's renewal strategy: its strategic plan for information management and information technology (IM/IT) and its integrated business/human resources (HR) plan. The Office expects that it will take until the end of fiscal year 2013-2014 to fully implement the model given the number and complexity of renewal initiatives involved.

All OIC branches and functions are contributing to this effort. The organizational structure of the Office of the Information Commissioner is shown in the diagram below.


PARLIAMENT
Information Commissionner of Canada
Assistant Commissionner, Complaints Resolution and Compliance
Assistant Commissionner, Policy, Communications and Operations
Director, Legal Services and General Counsel
Director, Human Resources

The **Complaints Resolution and Compliance (CRC) Branch** carries out investigations and dispute resolution efforts to resolve complaints[2].

The **Policy, Communications and Operations Branch** assesses federal institutions' performance under the Act, conducts systemic investigations and analysis, provides strategic policy direction, leads the Office's external relations with government and Parliament, and provides strategic and corporate leadership in the areas of financial management, internal audit and information management. This Branch is also responsible for the OIC's Access to Information and Privacy function.

The **Legal Services Branch** represents the Commissioner in court cases and provides legal advice on investigations, legislative issues and administrative matters.

The **Human Resources Branch** oversees all aspects of human resources management – from staffing and development to retention strategies – and provides advice to managers and employees on human resources issues.

Strategic Outcome and Program Activity

The Office of the Information Commissioner has one strategic outcome which it aims to achieve through one program activity.

Strategic Outcome	*Program Activity*
Individuals' rights under the *Access to Information Act* are safeguarded.	Compliance with access to information obligations.

1.2 Planning Summary

Financial Resources ($ thousands)

2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
12,062	11,936	11,668

The financial resources table above provides a summary of the total planned spending for the Office of the Information Commissioner for the next three fiscal years. The figures

[2] An Intake and Early Resolution Unit performs a triage of complaints as they come in, gathers supporting documents and forwards them to the appropriate investigators. It also carries out early resolution of administrative complaints (i.e. delays, deemed refusals, time extensions, fees, miscellaneous) and some refusal complaints. The Complaints Resolution and Compliance Team handle cases that did not qualify for early resolution or where early resolution was not successful. These more complex cases are advanced based on the priority established by the Intake unit. A Strategic Case Management Team reviews older outstanding complaints where little or no progress has been made by the CRC team, and implements strategies for completing them expeditiously.

reflect additional funding obtained in 2009-2010 to modernize and improve business processes and conduct activities in support of the Commissioner's mandate.

The additional funding stems from a request submitted to the Advisory Panel on the Funding and Oversight of Officers of Parliament and recommended to Treasury Board Ministers. This request was based on an in-depth analysis of OIC organizational priorities, workload drivers and resource levels. It took into account internal reallocation of resources and efficiency improvements derived, in particular, from the Office's streamlined investigations management process and IM/IT renewal initiatives. The funding request was also consistent with the results of a comparative analysis of resource levels at the OIC and other Officers of Parliament and organizations of comparable size and mandate.

Of the amounts requested, additional funding ranging between $2,545K and $3,012K (including Employee Benefit Plans) was granted for 2009-2010 to 2013-2014, levelling off at $2,745K on an ongoing basis. Variations in year-over-year planned spending are mainly attributable to IM/IT renewal initiatives.

Human Resources (Full-time Equivalent – FTE)

2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
106	106	106

The human resources table above provides a summary of the total planned human resources for the Office of the Information Commissioner for the next three fiscal years.

As a result of the new funding, 24 full-time equivalents were approved and added to the OIC's program activity. In the event of prolonged vacancies or a sudden surge in complaints, the OIC may have to contract out for consultants and temporary help services, which would result in increased costs to the Office.

The following sections discuss the work the Office plans to carry out with the resources available to achieve its strategic outcome through its sole program activity.

Planning Summary Table

The table below displays the financial resources allocated to the OIC's program activity, including Internal Services, as well as expected results. A complete description of this activity can be found online in the Main Estimates. Section 2.1.1 further discusses OIC's plans for its program activity in 2010-2011 and how expected results will ensure progress toward the strategic outcome.

Strategic Outcome: Individuals' rights under the *Access to Information Act* are safeguarded.
Performance Indicators and Targets
Effectiveness and timeliness of investigative process; responsiveness of institutions to OIC recommendations; OIC's influence on promoting information requestors' rights, notably through the parliamentary process and before the courts. See Section 2.1.1 for more details and targets.

Program Activity	Expected Results	Forecast Spending 2009–2010 ($ thousands)	Planned Spending ($ thousands)		
			2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Compliance with access to information obligations	• Complainants benefit from an effective and timely investigative process; • Institutions co-operate in addressing compliance issues; • All stakeholders receive useful information on ATI issues; • Parliament receives timely advice; • Courts receive useful representations and evidence.	11,679	12,062	11,936	11,668
Total Planned Spending* * *Includes Internal Services*		11,679	12,062	11,936	11,668

Contribution of Priorities to Strategic Outcome

For 2010-2011, the OIC has chosen to focus its attention and resources on a number of priorities that can best ensure progress toward its strategic outcome, which is to ensure that individuals' rights under the *Access to Information Act* are safeguarded. Operational priorities focus on ways to improve value-for-money in the program base, thus achieving better results for Canadians. Management priorities focus on improving the OIC's management practices, controls and infrastructure.

Operational Priorities	Type	Description
1. Continue to improve **service delivery** to individuals who have filed complaints with the Information Commissioner.	Ongoing	The OIC will further streamline and adjust its **investigations management process** to reduce the turnaround time of investigations. The goal is to achieve a manageable inventory of 200-500 complaints at year end by 2013-2014. The Office will also strengthen its **investigative capacity** by closely aligning staffing and training, as well as information systems, with current business requirements. The objective is to achieve an access to information system in which information requestors can have their complaints resolved in an effective and prompt manner. This is essential to ensuring transparency and openness of government. The Office strives to be exemplary in the area of service to requestors.
2. Foster **institutions' compliance** with their obligations under the *Access to Information Act* by pursuing the implementation of the OIC's Three-Year Plan for Report Cards. [3]	New	The OIC's first Three-Year Plan for Report Cards establishes a systematic and effective approach for examining and addressing non-compliance issues while instilling greater self-compliance among federal institutions. Published in July 2009, this evergreen document will be adjusted to take into account emerging trends and compliance issues. It integrates: • **follow-ups** on progress achieved by institutions to remedy previously identified institutional and systemic issues affecting access to information; • **performance reviews** of selected groups of institutions; and • **systemic investigations** into widespread or recurring issues of concern (e.g. use and duration of time extensions and magnitude of delays in responding to access requests).
3. Maximize compliance with the Act, notably by demonstrating best practices in **proactive disclosure** and fulfilling the statutory duty to assist information requestors.	New	The OIC will strategically use the various tools and activities included in its "compliance continuum"[4] to maximize its influence on institutional performance and indirectly contribute to greater government transparency and accountability. In 2010-2011, a particular focus will be placed on: • The introduction and maintenance of a redesigned **website** that will make optimal use of new technologies. This website will include, among other things, a **virtual reading room** giving timely access to all OIC decisions, major corporate documents and listing of ATI requests, with responses delivered electronically upon request. • Collaborative work and **partnerships** with various stakeholders to share information on challenges and best practices in access to information, particularly in the context of today's open data initiatives. These initiatives – which are gaining momentum in some of the most progressive countries and in a few large Canadian municipalities – involve public authorities making their data sets more readily available online for the public to use.

Operational Priorities	Type	Description
4. Serve as an **exemplary model** for the access to information process	Previously committed to	Since becoming subject to the *Access to Information Act*, the Office, through its Access to Information and Privacy (ATIP) Secretariat, has endeavoured to become a centre of excellence and a leader among federal institutions on how to effectively handle access and privacy requests and fulfill the duty to promptly assist information requestors. The Office will continue to encourage compliance by diligently responding to the access requests it receives.
5. Continue to advance the cause of **reforming the access to information regime** by providing ongoing support and advice to Parliament and parliamentary committees.	Ongoing	Modernizing access to information – through legislative and/or administrative reform – will ensure that the regime reflects the complex environment of the early 21st century. Amending the *Access to Information Act* is the prerogative of Parliament. The Information Commissioner may advocate for reform and make suggestions on how it should be done. She will maintain an active role as Officer of Parliament in 2010-2011 as legislators carry on their work on reforming the Act. To obtain the best possible information to support its advice and recommendations, the Office will continue to conduct national and international benchmarking and to document best practices worldwide.

Management Priorities	Type	Description
6. Build **organizational capacity**	Ongoing	To support the implementation of its new business model, deliver on its mandate and improve service delivery to Canadians, the Office will: • Continue with the implementation of its multi-year IM/IT renewal strategy, which focuses in 2010-2011 on revitalizing the information management program and replacing the outdated case management system. • Follow up on its integrated business and human resources plan by conducting ongoing staffing and training, while implementing strategies to retain and transfer investigative expertise and corporate knowledge. In addition, to improve performance management and measurement, the Office will: • Review and adjust the business model as part of its internal audit function. • Based on that information, complete the review of OIC's performance indicators and targets. • Update the organization's risk-based audit plan, taking into account the impact of the new business model and the incidence of added accountabilities for Officers of Parliament.

[3] Three-Year Plan: http://www.infocom.gc.ca/report_cards_2008-2009/three-year-plan-plan-trois-ans-e.asp
[4] Compliance Continuum: http://www.infocom.gc.ca/reports/2008-2009-ar-new-business-model-ra-nouveau-modele-gestion-e.asp#Maximizing_compliance

Risk Analysis

The OIC's strategic context and operating environment are characterized by a number of accountability mechanisms as well as external and internal factors that affect the organization's plans and performance and drive its decision-making.

Access to information legislation is one mechanism by which governments and public institutions are held accountable. Others include fair elections, freedom of the press, freedom of speech and assembly, independent audit and oversight, the parliamentary process with its committee system, question period and publications. These other accountability mechanisms require access to information about what public institutions think, decide and do, and the costs and impact of decisions and actions.

The pace and penetration of technological developments coupled with the emergence of "open data" initiatives in various quarters have drastically raised public expectations with respect to the quick availability of a wide range of government data in machine readable formats. A number of high profile issues, such as the war against terror and the state of the environment, also generate increasing interest on the part of all Canadians. Paradoxically, the complexity of government business combined with challenges in information management and the administration of the *Access to Information Act* tend to restrict or significantly delay responses to access requests.

Human and knowledge capital risks encompass the dual challenge of reduced HR capacity (i.e. number of resources) and insufficient HR capability (i.e. skills and experience). These risks have somewhat been mitigated by ongoing recruiting efforts. As of April 2010, the Office plans to have a full contingent of investigators and therefore will be in a position to operate at full capacity. Efforts will focus on developing, retaining and transferring this critical human and knowledge capital. Training is essential to develop internal expertise in the particulars of the OIC's investigative function and tools. It is also indispensable to bolster the organization's capacity to change and successfully implement all facets of its renewal strategy. At the same time, the OIC must mitigate the risks associated with instances of "single-point-of failure" (i.e. where corporate knowledge rests with a single individual).

Legal and statutory risks include risk events relating to non-compliance, court decisions, policy initiatives and legislative or regulatory frameworks that affect OIC activities. The OIC's level of success in achieving its strategic outcome is highly dependent on institutions' compliance with their obligations under the Act and acceptance of OIC recommendations and practice directions. The Office strategically uses various tools under its compliance continuum to exert the needed pressure or influence for institutional compliance. The compliance model itself is a key determinant in ensuring that individuals' rights under the Act are safeguarded. The Information Commissioner provides ongoing support and advice to Parliament and parliamentary committees in order to advance the cause of legislative and administrative reform.

IM/IT infrastructure risks encompass the risks that IM/IT requirements will not be in place to support organizational objectives and business needs. These risks stem from the complexity of the initiatives involved, the strict timelines embedded in the critical path as well as the risk of lapsing resources. To mitigate these risks, the OIC has developed a detailed long-term IM/IT Strategic Plan and it closely monitors its timely implementation.

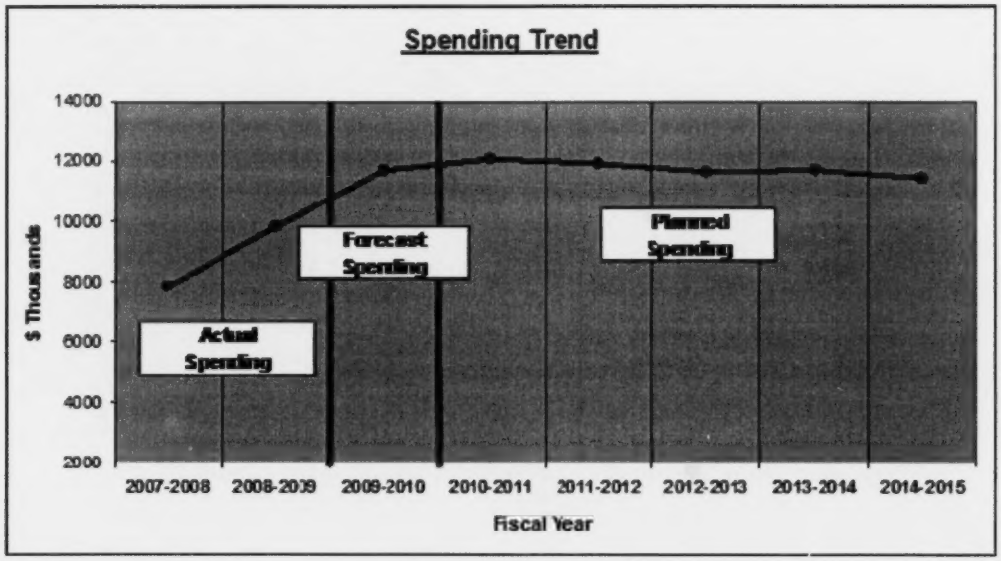
Expenditure Profile

For the 2010-2011 fiscal year, the Office of the Information Commissioner plans to spend $12,062K to meet the expected results of its program activity and contribute to its strategic outcome. The OIC is committed to ensuring that the financial resources will be used to make sustainable improvements to the way it delivers its program and meets its legislated obligations. Key components include:

- Continued streamlining of the investigations management process;
- An integrated approach to systemic issues and performance reviews;
- Strengthening of the internal services function;
- Continued implementation of the organization's IM/IT Strategic Plan and Integrated HR Plan;
- Review of the business model as part of the internal audit function; and
- Update of the OIC's risk-based audit plan.

Approximately 70 percent of OIC resources will be dedicated directly to its program activity. The remaining 30 percent is slated for internal services, such as HR management, IM/IT, Communications, Strategic Planning, Finance and Administrative Services. This percentage is consistent with other Officers of Parliament and organizations of comparable size and mandate.

The following figure illustrates the Office's spending trend from 2007-2008 to 2014-2015. From 2007-2008 to 2008-2009, core spending increased to meet ATIP and internal audit obligations introduced by the *Federal Accountability Act*. In 2009-2010, forecast spending also increased as a result of new funding obtained to modernize and improve business processes. The initial increase in planned spending from forecast spending is due primarily to increased staffing.



Voted and Statutory Items

The table below replicates the OIC's summary table included in the 2010-2011 Main Estimates. It is required by Parliament in its consideration of supply bills. Parliament approves the voted item (#40) on an annual basis. The statutory item (S) is displayed for information purposes only.

($ thousands)

Vote # or Statutory Item (S)	Truncated Vote or Statutory Wording	2009–2010 Main Estimates	2010–2011 Main Estimates
40	Operating expenditures	7,540	10,750
(S)	Contributions to employee benefit plans	965	1,312
	TOTAL	8,505	12,062

The difference between 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 Main Estimates ($3,557K) is due to additional funding from a submission to Treasury Board based on an in-depth analysis of OIC organizational priorities, workload drivers and resources levels. The increase also reflects compensation to meet requirements of recently signed collective agreements.

Section II – Analysis of Program Activities by Strategic Outcome

2.1 Strategic Outcome

All of OIC's program activity and efforts aim to achieve its single strategic outcome which is to ensure that individuals' rights under the *Access to Information Act* are safeguarded.

The following section describes the Office's program activity and identifies the expected results, performance indicators and targets. This section also explains how the Office plans on meeting the expected results and presents the financial and non-financial resources that will be dedicated to the program activity.

2.1.1 Program Activity: Compliance with Access to Information Obligations

Human Resources (FTEs) and Planned Spending ($ thousands)					
2010–2011		2011–2012		2012–2013	
FTEs	Planned Spending	FTEs	Planned Spending	FTEs	Planned Spending
75	8,201	75	8,129	75	8,129

Program Activity Expected Results	Performance Indicators	Targets
1. Individuals who have filed complaints with the Information Commissioner benefit from an effective and timely investigative process.	Effectiveness and timeliness of the investigative process	- 90 percent of investigations adhere to quality assurance standards at first round review. - 85 percent administrative complaints are resolved within 90 calendar days of their being registered, as per practice direction on Triage of Complaints.
2. Institutions meet their obligations under the Act and co-operate in addressing institutional and systemic issues affecting access to information.	Responsiveness of institutions to OIC's advice and recommendations	- 95 percent of recommendations from investigations of complaints are adopted. - 80 percent of recommendations from report cards and from systemic investigations are adopted.

Program Activity Expected Results	Performance Indicators	Targets
3. All stakeholders receive relevant and timely information on ATI issues and the role of oversight bodies in ensuring compliance with legislation.	OIC's influence on promoting compliance through information and partnerships	- Increase in national media coverage of OIC's reports, major decisions/announcements and collaborations - Accurate reporting and positive feedback (as determined by media content analysis) - 100 percent of OIC's corporate/special reports, findings of noteworthy investigations and summaries of ATI requests are posted on the Office's website as per proactive disclosure policy (being developed).
4. Parliament receives clear, relevant information and timely, objective advice about the access implications of legislation, jurisprudence, regulations and policies.	OIC's influence on the development of relevant legislation and policy through work in parliamentary committee	- 85 percent of access-relevant parliamentary committee reports referring to OIC's advice - Accurate references and positive feedback (as determined by content analysis)
5. Courts receive useful representations and relevant evidence about access issues, the proper interpretation of the provisions of the Act and of related statutes, regulations and jurisprudence.	OIC's contribution to the interpretation of relevant legislation and jurisprudence	- 90 percent of court cases where judgements support OIC's representation or considered OIC's evidence

Program Activity Summary

The *Access to Information Act* is the legislative authority for the oversight activities of the Information Commissioner of Canada, which are: to investigate complaints from individuals and corporations; to review the performance of federal institutions in complying with their obligations under the Act; to report results of investigations/reviews and recommendations to complainants, federal institutions, and Parliament; to pursue judicial enforcement; and to provide advice to Parliament on access to information matters.

Planning Highlights

In 2010-2011, the OIC will work to achieve its expected results and targets by undertaking the following activities.

Complaints Resolution
The Office will continue to streamline and adjust its investigations management process, as required by its new business model. In particular, it will monitor and evaluate the overall success of improvements related to staffing, timelines, productivity, monitoring and reporting. Appropriate performance assessments and reviews will be conducted through the Internal Audits.

In consultation with institutions and complainants, the Office will assess the effectiveness of its new online complaint form as well as new intake procedures that were put in place in the fall of 2009. These new procedures were widely communicated through the online publication of two practice directions: "Triage of complaints" and "Requesting Records from Institutions."

The ultimate goal for 2010-2011 is to completely eliminate the OIC's historical backlog of pre-April 2008 complaints. On an ongoing basis, the Office intends to limit its year end inventory of newly registered complaints to a manageable level of 200-500 cases by 2013-2014.

Performance reviews and systemic actions
The OIC will pursue the implementation of its Three-Year Plan for Report Cards. By integrating annual performance reviews of selected institutions, investigations of systemic issues and evidence drawn from investigations of complaints, the Office enhances its analytical capability and therefore the value of its findings, without duplication of efforts and undue reporting burden on institutions. The plan was published in July 2009 to make the process as transparent as possible while also encouraging proactive compliance on the part of institutions.

A special report to be submitted to Parliament by April 1, 2010 will discuss year one outcomes of the Three-Year Plan, including:

- follow-ups on progress achieved by the ten institutions assessed in 2008-2009, as well as Treasury Board Secretariat, in order to improve compliance with obligations under the Act and address a number of systemic issues affecting performance in responding to access requests;
- OIC's progress in responding to institutions' feedback about the report cards exercise, notably by establishing a new classification of findings; and
- performance reviews of 24 institutions who had at least five time-related complaints in 2008-2009.

In 2010-2011, the Office will monitor the implementation of resulting OIC recommendations and institutional action plans to remedy timeliness issues. In

accordance with the Three-Year Plan, the OIC will also proceed to review the performance of a selected group of institutions among those that the *Federal Accountability Act* added to the scope of the *Access to Information Act*, starting in 2007.

In addition, the OIC will use the information gathered to conduct an in-depth systemic investigation. This investigation will further analyse the use and duration of time extensions, while looking into their root causes and impact, which may amount to refusal of access.

Initiatives to maximize compliance and promote a pro-disclosure culture
Maximizing compliance is sometimes best achieved through the use of various tools and activities that are interdependent in complementing investigations and systemic actions. While developing its new business model, the Office established a compliance continuum of such tools and activities, which it will use, in particular, to extend the impact of its investigative work and recommendations, to facilitate compliance and to promote individuals' rights under the *Access to Information Act*.

- **Facilitating compliance through information**: In 2010-2011, the OIC will continue to publish various documents in plain language that will serve to explain its investigative process and disseminate its findings and recommendations. The Office recently disseminated two practice directions to provide greater insight into how it handles complaints, conducts investigations and resolves contentious issues. Additional practice directions are in the works for 2010-2011, notably on time frames and requirements for filing a complaint under the *Access to Information Act* and on commitment dates to disclose information.

- **Best practices in proactive disclosure**: Recent developments and trends, at home and abroad, increasingly support and call for greater use of proactive disclosure of public sector information. Notwithstanding the positive duty to assist information requestors, there are a number of benefits to disseminate information before access requests are made. All experts, including members of the ETHI parliamentary committee, have taken a stance in favour of greater access to information through proactive disclosure as a key determinant of government transparency and accountability, citizen engagement, collaboration and innovation.

- **Promoting requesters' rights through partnerships**: The Office will continue to collaborate with partners and counterparts, across Canada, to promote compliance with legislative requirements, raise awareness of underlying causes of and solutions to systemic issues, as well as the need for greater proactive disclosure.

Parliamentary relations: The OIC expects to provide continued support to the Interim Information Commissioner in her role as Officer of Parliament as legislators pursue their work and discussions on reforming the Act and improving the way it is administered. To obtain the best possible information to support its advice and recommendations, the Office will continue to conduct national and international benchmarking and to document

best practices worldwide through collaborative endeavours and partnerships with national, foreign and international experts and organizations.

Court cases: In 2010-2011, a number of ongoing or new court cases will likely involve the participation of Office counsel to clearly communicate the perspective of the Information Commissioner on a variety of access-related issues. Some of these issues are linked to Commissioner's findings from investigations over the years; others deal with issues of broad application that might affect the interpretation of the Act.

For example, the Supreme Court will hear appeals from the Information Commissioner in four cases that raise significant issues on what constitutes a record "under the control of a government institution" and whether information relating to Ministers' positions and functions falls under this definition. In addition, a judicial review application brought by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation before the Federal Court will test the Information Commissioner's power to order production of records over which s. 68.1 exclusion is claimed.

Benefits for Canadians

Under the *Access to Information Act*, anyone who makes a request for information to a federal institution and is dissatisfied with the response or the way it was handled has the right to complain to the Information Commissioner. The Office is committed to investigating these complaints in an objective and efficient manner. This investigative function is crucial to safeguarding the rights of individual Canadians to access government information.

To maximize compliance across federal institutions and reduce the number of complaints it receives, the Office takes a proactive approach to widespread or recurring non-compliance issues by investigating their root causes and recommending appropriate solutions. The Office also uses a variety of tools of general and specific applications to extend the impact of its investigations and systemic actions. This in turn maximizes service to Canadians.

In this same spirit, the Office's performance assessments, parliamentary relations and all related communications activities and collaborations focus on ensuring that Canadians know that they have the right to complain about the way their information requests are handled and that institutions have a responsibility to respond to those requests as quickly and completely as possible within the legal deadlines.

2.1.2 Program Activity: Internal Services

Human Resources (FTEs) and Planned Spending ($ thousands)					
2010–2011		2011–2012		2012–2013	
FTEs	Planned Spending	FTEs	Planned Spending	FTEs	Planned Spending
31	3,861	31	3,807	31	3,539

Program Activity Summary

Internal Services are groups of related activities and resources that are administered to support the needs of programs and other corporate obligations of an organization. These groups are: Management and Oversight Services; Communications Services; Human Resources Management Services; Financial Management Services; Information Management Services; Information Technology Services; Material Services; Acquisition Services; Travel and Other Administrative Services. Internal Services include only those activities and resources that apply across an organization and not those provided specifically to a program.

Planning Highlights

Enhanced IM and IT infrastructure: The OIC will continue to integrate and standardize its information management (IM) and information technology (IT) in accordance with its IM/IT strategy. Implementation of the IM/IT Strategic Plan 2009-2014 has already substantially improved the organization's productivity.

Sustaining HR capacity: The successful implementation of the OIC's new business model largely depends on its ability to attract, develop and retain a group of highly productive and technology-savvy investigators. As of April 2010, the OIC expects that its full contingent of investigator positions will be staffed. However, as this group is currently in high demand across the government, staffing will remain an ongoing activity within the OIC and will likely be completed in accordance with the organization's integrated HR Plan for 2009-2014.

Strategic planning and financial reporting: While introducing its new business model, the Office has proceeded to integrate and streamline its corporate planning and reporting to ensure closer alignment and improve performance measurement and management. In 2010-2011, it will consolidate those gains by completing its review of the various items under its program activity, particularly its performance indicators and targets, to ensure that it can accurately measure its performance and that its work is focused on fulfilling its strategic outcome. The Office will also reassess the risks that could potentially affect the achievement of the organization's objectives, taking into account its dynamic

environment and the impact of the new business model. This assessment is essential to implementing a proactive approach to risk management, which will eventually become a critical element of the OIC's annual planning process.